

Meet the Fellows: Catherine Oluwakemi Onabanjo

Nigeria, Public Management, University of Minnesota

Catherine Oluwakemi Onabanjo is currently a consultant for McKinsey & Company's Lagos office, where she serves public sector, social sector and corporate clients across West Africa on their growth, strategy and transformation programs.

In addition to her client work, she is a member of the board of trustees for Helping Other People Excel (HOPE), an NGO whose theory of change is that developing leadership skills in Nigeria's teenagers today will cultivate change agents who will drive social change in the country.

Kemi holds a Bachelor of Science in computer science from Covenant University and continues to closely engage with the university as welfare secretary and community outreach coordinator of the Covenant University Alumni Association.

Upon completion of the Washington Fellowship, Kemi plans to focus on capability building and development of her public sector clients, as she believes that the enhanced capability of public sector employees is a critical enabler to unleash Nigeria's great potentials.

Photo credit: Catherine Oluwakemi Onabanjo

Meet the Fellows: Khanyisile Magubane

South Africa, Business and Entrepreneurship, Northwestern University

Khanyisile Magubane is a filmmaker and radio broadcaster with 14 years of media experience in radio broadcasting, online media, film and TV production, and magazine feature writing. She is currently producing a four-part documentary series entitled *Making Cents*, which looks at the economic inequalities in South Africa and its root causes.

She currently hosts two radio shows on SAfm, a leading South African news and current affairs radio station. A trained journalist, she has worked as a news reporter, radio producer and presenter. Her breakout work as a documentary filmmaker was in 2012, when she wrote and produced a six-part documentary series entitled *Why Are We So Angry?*

Khanyisile holds a bachelor's degree in communications and an honors degree in journalism from the University of Johannesburg. Upon completion of the Washington Fellowship, Khanyisile will use knowledge acquired to build up a media enterprise that will use media as a vehicle for positive change in Africa.

Photo credit: Khanyisile Magubane

Meet the Fellows: Dziedzorm Segbefia

Ghana, Business and Entrepreneurship, Dartmouth College

Dziedzorm “JayJay” Segbefia is general partner of BraveHearts Expeditions and works as expedition leader on the firm’s experiential learning adventure activities. His company won this past year’s StartUp Cup Ghana Business Model Competition, in which he was personally acclaimed and honored with the Ghana Angel Investor Network’s coveted Most Promising Entrepreneur 2013 Award. He led his firm to place second in the first World StartUp Cup Competition, hosted in Armenia in January, and compensated four months later by winning the Enablis Business Launchpad Competition.

Although his academic background is in communication studies and journalism, he has over a decade’s experience in extensive adventure leadership, having conducted a total of 387 jungle, mountain, white water and wilderness experiential learning expeditions across Africa. Before founding BraveHearts Expeditions, he honed his skills as a public relations officer of a graduate university and briefly as junior communications adviser to the African Cashew Initiative (ACI) of GIZ, Germany’s leading provider of international cooperation services.

JayJay plans to apply the business and entrepreneurship education experience from the Washington Fellowship to expanding the revenue streams of his young firm with commercial rappelling sports and corporate expedition services that will create more economic opportunity and jobs for Ghana’s teeming unemployed young people.

Photo credit: Dziedzorm Segbefia

14 Simple Ways to Be Incredibly Productive: Part 2

Adapted from an article by Jeff Haden published June 14 on Linkedin. Haden is a speaker and a contributing editor for Inc. Magazine.

And there is more.

8. Rework your morning routine.

"Then make sure you can get to that task as smoothly as possible. Pretend you're an Olympic sprinter and your morning routine is like the warm-up for a race. Don't dawdle, don't ease your way into your morning, and don't make sure you get some 'me' time."

9. Refine one repetitive task.

"Think of a task you do on a regular basis."

"Now deconstruct it. Make it faster. Or improve the quality. Pick something you do that has become automatic and actively work to make it better."

10. Eat one meal differently.

"Eating can take up a lot of time, especially if you eat [in restaurants]."

"Pick one meal to eat efficiently. Turn 30 to 60 minutes of dead time into 10 minutes of refueling and recharging. Bring something healthy you can eat at your desk like a salad or fruit. Use that meal to fuel up in a healthy way. Then move instantly on to doing something productive."

"You'll feel better. And you'll get more done."

11. Outsource one task.

"I was raised to think that any job I could do myself was a job I should do myself."

"Then I realized the kid down the street could cut my grass. He could use the money. I could use the time."

12. Fix that one thing you tend to screw up.

"I'm terrible about putting meetings and phone calls on my calendar. I figure I'll get to it later ... and then I never do. Then I spend way too much time, often in a panic, trying to figure out when and where and who."

"All that time is wasted time. So I committed to a process, not a goal. I immediately enter every appointment into my calendar the moment I make it — regardless of what else I might be doing."

13. Take advantage of your commute.

"Make it productive instead. Review your to-do list and think of the best way to knock off those tasks. Listen to a podcast or audiobook."

14. Pick one task during which you won't multitask.

"Plenty of research says multitasking doesn't work."

"I feel sure there is at least one thing you do that is so important you should never allow a distraction or a loss of focus."

"Choose an important task and when you perform it, turn everything else off."

14 Simple Ways to Be Incredibly Productive: Part 1

Adapted from an article by Jeff Haden published June 14 on LinkedIn. Haden is a speaker and a contributing editor for Inc. Magazine.

Let's get right to it.

1. Eliminate one ego commitment.

"We all do things that have more to do with ego than results. Maybe you serve on a committee because you like how it looks on your CV. Maybe you teach at a local college because you like the words 'adjunct professor.'"

"The things you do mostly for ego are mostly a waste of time. Think about something you do mainly because it makes you look important, smart or cool. If it provides no other 'value,' drop it."

2. Create a happy self.

"When I'm happy, I do better work. You will too."

3. Stop looking for that (meaningless) extra 10 percent.

"When I start to do something, within a short period of time I start wanting to do it better than other people."

"Take cycling. I'm faster, fitter ... than the average person. But compared to the fast guys, I'm nothing. That makes me ride more and train more and spend tons of hours on a bike — and for what? So I can hang with them for a couple more miles?"

"At that point the improvement to my overall health is incremental at best. And in the meantime I spend hours on cycling that I could spend on working towards more important goals. Or I could just spend more time with my family, the most important goal of all."

"Weigh the input with the outcome."

4. Rehearse how you'll say no.

"It's important to know, with grace and tact, how to say no."

"Most of us default to 'yes' because we don't want to seem rude or unfriendly or unhelpful. That also means we default to taking on more than we want or can handle."

“Maybe your response will be as simple as ... ‘I’m sorry, but I just don’t have time.’”

“Whatever you decide to say, rehearse so it comes naturally.”

5. Eliminate one “fun” commitment.

“I played fantasy Premier League soccer. When I thought about it, though, I had no idea why. I could rationalize that it created a nice break. I could rationalize it was like a ‘mental health’ activity that let me step aside from the stress and strain of business life. ... But that wasn’t true.”

“If you wouldn’t do something while you were on vacation, there’s no good reason to do it when you’re not.”

6. Set limits.

“Deadlines and time frames establish parameters, but typically not in a good way. ... Tasks should only take as long as they need to take — or as long as you decide they should take.”

“Pick a task, set a time limit and stick to that time limit. Necessity, even artificial necessity, is the mother of creativity. You’ll figure out how to make it work.”

7. Rework your nighttime routine.

“Every day the first thing you do is the most important thing you will do. It sets the tone for the rest of the day.”

“Prepare for it the night before. Make a list. Make a few notes. Review information. Prime yourself to hit the ground at an all-out sprint the next day. A body in super-fast motion tends to stay in super-fast motion.”

Photo credit: Shutterstock

Entrepreneur Turns Games into Business

As a kid, Daniel Okalany loved to play games with his friends — card games, board games, all kinds of games.

“That was a good time,” the Kampala resident said, explaining that as he grew older, finding simple games like those played with a deck of cards became tough. Then he and his friends “realized that we could make some of those games come alive again.”

In 2011, Okalany founded Kola Studios to do just that. The Kenyan company uses smartphone applications to provide games based on the Ugandan tradition of matatu and the Kenyan tradition of karata.

People want to “reconnect with games they used to play when they were younger,” said Okalany, who studied computer science at Makerere University in Kampala. The company generates revenue by integrating ads with the games.

“We haven’t looked back for a second,” the company founders state on their website. “We love working in a very relaxed and free environment, participating in the community and interacting with the budding tech community in Kampala.”

In June, Okalany, a member of the YALI Network, spent two weeks in Chicago and Washington learning how innovators and entrepreneurs in the United States tackle their common business challenges. His visit was sponsored by the Global Innovation through Science and Technology (GIST) initiative and included young entrepreneurs from Kenya, Uganda, Jordan, Tunisia, Pakistan, Indonesia and Malaysia.

“The entrepreneurs in Chicago were really good. Their companies are in different stages of growth, with annual revenues ranging from \$100,000 to several million dollars. Some had in-depth knowledge of sales, marketing, technology, copyright or trademarks,” he said.

“The most important thing that I learned is that everyone is working really hard. ... A lot of the time you think it’s just you having to work hard for these things and everyone else is getting it easy.”

Kola Studios works out of a shared office space for individuals and companies refining their business concepts. At times, he volunteers at the business hub, helping other young entrepreneurs work through their ideas.

Okalany said that upon his return to Kampala he plans to share the business insights he picked up from the U.S. entrepreneurs with members of his Kola team and with the technology and business groups in his community.

Photo credit: Daniel Okalany

Early Challenges Inspire Later Success

Entrepreneur and community volunteer Christopher Asego credits the challenges of growing up in a slum as inspiration for wanting to help end poverty.

“The world has lots of problems. People who live them every day have the best solutions,” he says on his Facebook page.

In June, Asego, a YALI Network member, spent two weeks in Chicago and Washington learning how innovators and entrepreneurs in the United States tackle their common business challenges. His visit was sponsored by the Global Innovation through Science and Technology (GIST) initiative and included young entrepreneurs from Kenya, Uganda, Jordan, Tunisia, Pakistan, Indonesia and

Malaysia.

Growing up, Asego attended an overcrowded school in Nairobi's Kibera area. Too shy to question his teacher when he didn't understand something, he lagged behind his classmates. "Not every child can learn in the same way at the same speed," he said.

But Asego had an advantage. His mother was a teacher and stuck by her son until he graduated from secondary school. "Not every child is as lucky as I was. ... A lot of children who experience early failure in school end up dropping out," he said.

Now 27, Asego went on to graduate from Kenya's Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. He partnered with two peers to create Eneza Education, a firm that serves as a mobile phone-based tutor and teacher's assistant. Eneza, which means "to reach" or "to spread," aims "to make 50 million kids across Africa smarter," according to the company's website.

Asego said he will take what he learned in the United States back to his community and company. He especially wants to share his knowledge with "up-and-coming entrepreneurs" who face the challenges of getting a business off the ground. "Back home, when you approach an investor, they want to see traction — traction you don't have because you are just a startup," he said.

Aside from his business, Asego volunteers to help eradicate jiggers from his community. Jiggers are tropical parasitic insects that "affect the interiors of the toes of children when they walk barefoot," Asego said. With other volunteers involved in the nationwide effort to eradicate jiggers from Kenya by 2015, Asego goes house-to-house to wash children's feet with a disinfectant.

"I have developed some kind of attachment to the slum because I grew up there," he said.

Photo credit: Christopher Asego

Latest World Food Prize Laureate on Leadership

Sanjaya Rajaram believes that leadership can come with time.

Rajaram, who was just named the 2014 World Food Prize Laureate, led for decades the wheat-breeding program at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) in Mexico.

As a young scientist at CIMMYT, "it took me some time before I could develop some of the skills in leadership," said the successful Indian-born researcher. "I was able to recognize very early that there has to be a good balance in productivity and in people's aspirations."

"For me, the central core of leadership is team building, getting the best people to work together and recognizing each individual for their contribution to a common goal," Rajaram said.

Rajaram claims the noted plant pathologist, World Food Prize founder and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Norman Borlaug as his main inspiration as a scientist and as a leader. He was highly influenced by fellow India native M.S. Swaminathan, who taught him about genetics, and by other agricultural researchers. "I basically heard these people talk about their philosophies, and that was enough for me," he said.

After his time at CIMMYT, Rajaram became director of the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), part of the same international research consortium that includes CIMMYT. He then moved to a private plant-breeding program in Mexico working on wheat and barley.

"Dr. Rajaram has helped to feed millions of people across the world through his lifetime of research and innovation," U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said.

Rajaram noted that scientists of all ages who work to improve the quality and quantity of food accept that their work will have both successes and failures. "There are failures in most innovations. Indeed, in agricultural innovations, and especially in plant breeding, there are more failures than success," he said.

Speaking of young people considering taking up agriculture as a career, Rajaram said: "I believe today's youth would be very much interested in agriculture as a career if they understood the importance of food, nutrition, health, the environment and related issues."

"We need leaders to talk to youth in language they can understand," Rajaram said.

Photo credit: World Food Prize

Basketball Star Dikembe Mutombo on Sports, Leadership

"You cannot succeed in life if you don't know how to work with people, just like you cannot win a game without your teammates."

That is what basketball great Dikembe Mutombo told young African leaders taking part in a June 26 live Twitter chat. For more than an hour, Mutombo, who was born and raised in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), responded to questions about topics ranging from sports and leadership to gender equality and his charitable health care foundation. The chat was the latest in a series hosted by the U.S. Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) Network.

Mutombo, who serves as a global ambassador for the National Basketball Association (NBA), said future leaders need to stay focused. "You cannot let anything distract you when you're trying to achieve something. You have to keep the course."

Mutombo came to the United States from Kinshasa at the age of 19 to study medicine at Georgetown University on a scholarship. At 2.18 meters tall, he soon was recruited to play on the university's highly regarded basketball team. After graduating in 1991 with bachelor's degrees in linguistics and diplomacy, Mutombo was drafted by the Denver Nuggets. He played for five other NBA teams before retiring in 2009.

For Mutombo, the value of sport goes beyond spirited competition. "Sport isn't about your height, your race, your gender. It's about your ability to perform," the athlete said. "Sport is an activity that brings people together" and can teach players "soft skills" such as ethics and communications.

The now-retired basketball player leads the Dikembe Mutombo Foundation Inc., which raises funds to improve health and education in the DRC. Through the foundation, Mutombo helped build a hospital in Kinshasa, which he considers "one of my biggest accomplishments in my life."

"I knew that the ball would stop bouncing one day," he said of his career switch. "Life has to go on."

On perceptions of a disease that continues to have an impact on Africa, Mutombo said it is important that people have accurate information about HIV/AIDS. "Being HIV-positive does not mean you are sick. You can continue to live your life and fulfill your dream as long as you take care of yourself." He noted that another former basketball star, Magic Johnson, played pro ball while being HIV-positive.

"HIV/AIDS ... continues to be a big challenge for Africa," Mutombo said. "There are treatments, but education remains key. Like the Old Testament says, people perish because of lack of knowledge. Education will remain the source for us to save our future society."

On leadership, Mutombo said that leaders "choose to make themselves leaders." He encouraged his young chatters to "be devoted to your work, have self-discipline, devote yourself to the team and try to succeed."

"My hope is that the Africa of my ancestors will be totally different than the Africa of my descendants. You will be part of that journey."

To find out about future chats for young African leaders, tune into the YALI Network on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Photo credit: U.S. Department of State

Pro Basketball Players Teach Leadership, Teamwork in Senegal

What helps children learn leadership, character and teamwork? The NBA and USAID think one

option is sports.

The U.S. National Basketball Association (NBA) has partnered with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the nonprofit Sport, Education & Economic Development (SEED) Project to launch Live, Learn and Play, a program to teach leadership, character and teamwork in Senegal.

On May 7, representatives of the three partner groups gathered on a newly renovated basketball court at the John F. Kennedy High School in Dakar. More than 100 children from participating schools were put through their paces under the tutelage of Gorgui Dieng, a forward with the NBA's Minnesota Timberwolves team, and SEED Project alumnus. Joining them was fellow Senegalese native Astou Ndiaye, a Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) legend.

Live, Learn and Play uses basketball and the values of the game as a vehicle to teach life skills and promote leadership to boys and girls between the ages of 13 and 15 in 20 schools across Senegal. Each school will conduct at least two basketball practices a week and hold games and tournaments on weekends. Practices will take place at all of the participating schools and will include both boys and girls.

Live, Learn and Play includes a coaching-development element with a curriculum designed by the NBA and implemented by SEED. Coaches will implement the basketball curriculum locally. The program includes a mentorship component to provide coaches with a broad support network. The partners plan to expand the program to other countries in Africa.

More than 30 African players have played on NBA teams since Nigerian Hakeem Olajuwon joined the Houston Rockets in 1984. Through NBA Cares, the league has created 37 places to live, learn or play in Africa and 11 times has held Basketball Without Borders Africa camps to promote the sport and encourage positive social change in education, health and wellness.

The league opened an African headquarters in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2010 and launched the Royal Bafokeng Sport Junior NBA development program in 2011.

Photo credit: AP Images
